



**Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.**

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**Testimony  
Submitted to the  
Education Committee**

**March 3, 2021**

**SB 948 AN ACT ADDRESSING EDUCATION FUNDING AND RACIAL EQUITY IN  
CONNECTICUT.**

**HB 6535 AN ACT CONCERNING ISSUES RELATING TO SCHOOL SECURITY.**

**SB 945 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION.**

The Connecticut Association of Boards of Education supports those bills, like SB 948, which propose to enhance the state support for public education.

The economic challenges faced at all of levels of government are felt most intensively at the local level – where we are in the middle of the budget development and adoption season. Many districts have faced several years of 0% budget increases. Given the number of new initiatives and reforms put in place by the federal, state and local governments, this is a time where we need to maintain our commitment to our public schools.

CABE strongly supports efforts to better recognize the needs of some of our most vulnerable students – English Learners and students living in poverty.

Providing for the use of October 2019 or October 2020 resident student accounts is important in order to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on accurate student enrollment numbers.

CABE also urges you to remove the cap on the Special Education Cost grant. Continuation of the cap on the Special Education Excess Cost Grant creates an increased hardship on local districts as these costs continue to rise. We urge you to remove the cap on the Special Education Excess Cost Grant to restore the safety net available to districts for these extraordinary educational costs.

CABE supports HB 6535, An Act Concerning Issues Relating to School Security, which would establish a working group to examine the role of school resource officers in public schools. CABE supports local decision making around this very important issue which impacts the culture and climate of a school. It is critical to have the input of the students and staff in making decisions about the appropriate roles and responsibilities for school resource officers.

CABE strongly supports the provisions in SB 945, which allows for the certification of educators graduating from English speaking institutions to teach in bilingual programs. Accepting an earned degree from an institution where the language of instruction is English to demonstrate written English proficiency, and an earned degree from an institution where the language of instruction is the second language sought, to demonstrate oral and written proficiency in that language would eliminate time consuming, expensive assessments of proficiency without lowering standards. Authorizing elementary bilingual teachers to serve students in grades K through 9 and middle grades bilingual teachers in grades 4 through 9 improves district flexibility to create multi-age groups that better serve the academic needs of these students, some of whom need elementary level instruction. This bill

also addresses the severe shortage of secondary bilingual teachers by reducing the number of credits required to teach in secondary bilingual programs. It seeks to create secondary level bilingual STEM and bilingual humanities endorsements to allow the holders to teach any bilingual content that falls within these broader content area categories. This allows more flexibility for districts and reduces barriers for teachers while maintaining content knowledge standards to better serve bilingual students. We urge you to support these provisions.

We appreciate your attention to these issues.